

# Excerpts From 1969 National Security Study of Vietnam War Requested by Nixon

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WASHINGTON, April 25—Following are excerpts from National Security Study Memorandum 1, the 548-page study of the Vietnam war ordered by Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's adviser on national security, at the request of the President on Jan. 21, 1969. The document was made available to The New York Times, which supplied the headlines that appear on the excerpts.

## Bombing of North Vietnam

### C.I.A.

Almost four years of air war in North Vietnam have shown—as did the Korean war—that, although air strikes will destroy transport facilities, equipment and supplies, they cannot successfully interdict the flow of supplies because much of the damage can frequently be repaired within hours.

The major effects of the bombing of North Vietnam were extensive damage to the transport network, widespread economic disruption, greatly increased manpower requirements and the problems of maintaining the morale of the people in the face of personal hardships and deprivation. Hanoi was able to cope effectively with each of these strains, so that the air war did not seriously affect the flow of men and supplies to Communist forces in Laos and South Vietnam. Nor did it significantly erode North Vietnam's military defense capability or Hanoi's determination to persist in the war. Material losses resulting from the bombing were, for the most part, offset by increased imports from Communist countries.

Communist military and economic aid to North Vietnam to a large extent offset the physical destruction and the disruptive effects of the U.S. bombing and were instrumental in maintaining the morale of the people. Communist countries provided all of the weapons; enough food, consumer goods and materials to compensate for the domestic output, and most of the equipment and materials to maintain the transport system. Without Communist aid, most of it from the Soviet Union and China—particularly given the pressures generated by the bombing—the Vietnamese Communists would have been unable to sustain the war in both South and North Vietnam on anything like the levels actually engaged in during the past three years.

The amount of Communist economic aid delivered annually has grown from a yearly average of less than \$100-million through 1964, to \$150-million in 1965, \$275-million in 1966, \$370-million in 1967 and \$460-million in 1968. The value of Communist military aid increased from an average of less than \$15-million a year during 1954-64 to

\$270-million in 1965, \$455-million in 1966 and \$650-million in 1967. With the restricted bombings of the heavily defended northern part of the country in 1968, military aid deliveries were reduced. At least 75 per cent of total military aid since 1965 has been for air defense.

North Vietnam's air defenses significantly reduced the effectiveness of the U. S. bombing, resulted directly or indirectly in the loss of almost 1,100 U. S. aircraft and provided a psychological boost to morale. Before 1965, the Soviet Union had provided North Vietnam with only ground forces equipment, transport and trainer aircraft and small naval patrol craft, while China had provided MIG-15/17 jet fighters, motor gunboats and ground forces equipment. Since early 1965, the U.S.S.R. has provided North Vietnam with most of its air defense systems, including surface-to-air missiles, jet fighters, a radar network and antiaircraft artillery. Chinese military aid since 1965, much smaller than that from the U.S.S.R., has been important primarily in building up North Vietnam's ground forces including equipping Communist ground forces in South Vietnam with the AK-47 assault rifle, the 107-mm. rocket and other new weapons.

All of the war-essential imports could be brought into North Vietnam over rail lines or roads from China in the event that imports by sea were successfully denied. The disruption to imports, if sea-borne imports were cut off, would be widespread but temporary. Within two or three months North Vietnam and its allies would be able to implement alternative procedures for maintaining the flow of essential economic and military imports. The uninterrupted capacities of the railroad, highway and river connections with China are about 16,000 tons per day, more than two and a half times the 6,300 tons per day of total imports overland and by sea in 1963, when the volume reached an all-time high.

Two principal rail lines connect Hanoi with Communist China, with a combined capacity of over 9,000 tons a day. Eight primary highway routes cross the China border, carrying about 5,000 tons per day. In addition, the Red River flows out of China and has a capacity averaging 1,500 tons per

It is generally agreed that a feasible method for analyzing Arc Light effectiveness has not yet been devised. Field commanders are lavish in their praise. COMUSMACV recently stated that Arc Light was his strategic reserve and had the equivalent combat punch of two divisions. No one has been able to quantitatively support such claims (or disprove them). Hard evidence on the effectiveness of the Arc Light program is difficult to find. Certainly some strikes are highly effective. Some are clearly wasted. The majority have an undetermined impact.

The J.C.S. estimate that 41,250 enemy were killed in 1968 by all in-country B-52 strikes. This is an average of 2.5 enemy killed per sortie.

Office of the Secretary of Defense estimates of enemy killed by Arc Light are much lower than those of the J.C.S.

If this average enemy casualty rate is extrapolated to include all B-52 strikes, Arc Light apparently has killed day.

### Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that resumption of an interdiction campaign similar to that carried out in Route Package I between July and 1 November 1968 would assure almost total interdiction of truck and waterborne movement of supplies into the demilitarized zone and Laos. Naval blockade offshore and interdiction of Region Package II to Thanhhoa would further enhance this effort.

Commitment of B-52 forces following heavy and unrestricted suppression of defenses by fighters, could reduce the amount of time to accomplish the above.

There is not sufficient data available at this time on either the cost or the effectiveness of an air campaign against these land lines to reach a firm conclusion as to the chances of isolating NVN from her neighbors. Past attempts to cut rail, road and water networks in NVN have met with considerable difficulties. It has been estimated that a minimum of 6,000 attack sorties per month would be required against the two rail lines from China. Even at this level of effort, the North Vietnamese could continue to use the rail lines to shuttle supplies if they were willing to devote sufficient manpower to repair and transshipment operations.

It is not possible to give a definitive amount to the question of how much war-essential imports could come into NVN if sea imports are denied and a strong air campaign is initiated.

The act of sealing off the enemy's lines of communication must be considered as an integral part of any plan to prevent supplies from reaching enemy forces in the Republic of Vietnam.

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